

U.S.S. "SAN DIEGO" MEMORIAL

HON. SUSAN DAVIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 10, 2002

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to salute a great warship that was named for a great maritime city: my hometown of San Diego.

The U.S.S. *San Diego* served our nation with honor and distinction during World War II. The *San Diego* was a light cruiser whose principal purpose was to provide antiaircraft protection to the fast carrier task groups that formed the backbone of the fleet during the war in the Pacific. Commissioned in January 1942, the *San Diego* joined the Pacific Fleet just prior to the Battle of Midway and saw her first action in the Guadalcanal campaign in the summer of 1942. The *San Diego* participated altogether in 42 months of nearly continuous operations, was involved in 34 engagements with enemy forces, earned 18 Battle Stars for her World War II campaigns, and was selected by Admiral Halsey to be the first major U.S. warship to enter Tokyo Bay upon the surrender of Japan.

Though the *San Diego* has been decommissioned and scrapped for many years, she has not been forgotten. The U.S.S. *San Diego* Memorial Association is a nonprofit organization formed with the goal of erecting a permanent memorial in San Diego, its namesake city, to honor the valiant and remarkable services of the cruiser U.S.S. *San Diego* and the men who served aboard her during the tumultuous and historical years of 1941–1945. Association membership includes surviving Navy veterans who served on the *San Diego* during the war. The Port of San Diego has donated a prime waterfront site for the U.S.S. *San Diego* Memorial, and the Memorial Association is raising private funds to construct a beautiful monument.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the U.S.S. *San Diego* Memorial Association and the Port of San Diego for their tremendous efforts to pay tribute to this great ship and her crew. Once again, the people of San Diego are demonstrating their strong support for the United States Navy and its many contributions to our nation's defense.

CELEBRATING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, BONHAM

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 10, 2002

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am honored today to recognize the 150th anniversary of the First Baptist Church of Bonham, Texas, in the hometown of the late great Speaker of the House Sam Rayburn. On November 10th, the First Baptist Church will celebrate one hundred and fifty years of worship and service in Bonham and the surrounding community—an expanse of time that reflects the dedication and vitality of the church's pastors, leaders and members over several generations.

First Baptist Church, Bonham, organized in early November 1852, sixteen years after the

founding of Bonham and seven years after the annexation of Texas into the United States. Rev. J.R. Briscoe, a pioneer Baptist preacher, began the church with six charter members. They first met in the Masonic Hall but were soon able to move into their own building, which was also used as a schoolhouse. On January 24, 1855, for the sum of \$50, they purchased the building, and each succeeding building has stood on this same plot of land on the corner of Eighth and Center Streets.

In 1855 a new frame building was constructed. This was used for joint Sunday School services of the Baptist, Episcopal, Methodist, and Presbyterian churches. It was also used for special meetings, weddings, and funerals for a wide area around Bonham. By 1915, the church building was no longer adequate for further growth, and despite the scarcity of supplies and the high prices of the World War I years, the congregation was able to construct a new two-story building, including a basement, in 1919 and dedicate it in 1921, free of debt. The services were led by Rev. George W. Truett, pastor of First Baptist Church, Dallas.

Due to structural problems during the following years, a new building was constructed in 1958 and still stands today. Some of the furnishings that had been in the earlier buildings are part of the new structure—including several magnificent stained glass windows and a scene over the baptistery taken from a photograph of the Jordan River.

First Baptist Church, Bonham, was very much in the news in November 1961 as the place where the funeral service for Speaker Rayburn, beloved citizen of Bonham, was held. Countless numbers of dignitaries were in attendance, including President John F. Kennedy, Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson, former presidents Harry S. Truman and Dwight D. Eisenhower. A plaque inscribed with their names adorns the pew where they sat.

First Baptist Church, Bonham, is rich in history. It is a shining example of the positive influence that churches make in the lives of our citizens and the fabric of our communities—and a powerful testament to the importance of faith and religious expression in the United States of America. We are, indeed, "one Nation under God." In preparation for its Sesquicentennial Celebration on November 10, a history of the church has been compiled that will honor all those who so diligently worked and sacrificed in their service to their church and their community. This celebration also will inspire current and future generations to carry on the wonderful legacy that was begun one hundred and fifty years ago.

Mr. Speaker, First Baptist Church, Bonham, was built upon the solid rock of Christian faith and service—and upon that rock it will continue to grow. I congratulate the members of First Baptist Church, Bonham, on this important milestone in the history of their church—and I wish them "God speed" as they continue to meet the needs of those in Bonham, the surrounding community, and mission fields around the world.

SUPPORT CONCURRENT RECEIPT

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 10, 2002

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of concurrent receipt.

I am proud to be a cosponsor of legislation that would permit military retirees to concurrently draw their retired pay and disability benefits without an offset to either.

I firmly believe that retired members of the Armed Forces who are eligible for disability compensation should receive both their retirement and disability entitlement.

In fact, military retirees are the only group of federal retirees who must waive retirement pay in order to receive VA disability compensation. That's unfair and it should be corrected.

When asked about concurrent receipt, one combat veteran said it best. He said, "When I was flying combat missions in Korea, I knew there was a possibility of being shot down, captured, and tortured by the enemy. And I was unlucky enough to have that happen. But I never dreamed that Uncle Sam would penalize me by making me pay for my own disability compensation out of the retired pay I was supposed to have earned for my 24 years of military service."

Lt. Col. Norman E. Duquette, the person who said that, is one of nearly 500,000 disabled military retirees penalized by this unfair provisions that stops them from keeping veterans' disability compensation and full military retired pay—even though the two have entirely different purposes.

On February 1, 2002, I joined several of my congressional colleagues in sending a letter to President Bush requesting that he include in his FY 2003 budget request the funds necessary to eliminate the current offset between military retired pay and VA disability compensation. Unfortunately, when President Bush delivered his FY 2003 budget request to Congress on February 4, 2002, funds for implementing concurrent receipt for disabled military retirees were not included in it.

In recent days, President Bush has actually threatened to veto the Defense Authorization bill because he opposes fixing the concurrent receipt problem. That's why this motion is necessary and so important.

New Jersey veterans have heard enough excuses. We owe them this for their service to our Nation, especially now, as our Nation is calling upon the members of the armed forces to defend democracy and freedom.

RECOGNIZING WILLIAM CARROLL FOR HIS OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO THE PEOPLE OF SOLANO COUNTY

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

HON. DOUG OSE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 10, 2002

Mr. THOMPSON. Mr. Speaker, we rise today to recognize the Chair of the Solano